



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
District 32



Room 433 - State Capitol Bldg. - Jefferson City, MO 65101 - Phone: (573) 751-2306

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For additional information contact:
Barbara Mustoe
(573) 751-2306

LEGISLATION WOULD MAKE IT EASIER FOR SMALL BUSINESSES TO DO BUSINESS

Small businesses created 44,100 jobs in Missouri in 2002, making them largely responsible for the economic recovery that has begun in this state. For that reason, I have again co-sponsored legislation that would make it less cumbersome to operate a small business.

On Monday, I joined lawmakers and small business owners from throughout the state for a press conference to discuss Senate Bill 718 which would create the Small Business Regulatory Fairness Board.

According to the Missouri Secretary of State's office there have been 13,972 rules filed since 1996. There were 2,442 rule makings filed in 2002 alone.

Small business owners have a difficult time keeping up with the volume of rules that confront them.

This board's purpose would be to provide a venue by which Missouri small business owners can have regulatory concerns heard and remedied outside of court.

The board would be made up of two members appointed by the governor, one member appointed by the lieutenant governor, one member who is chair of the minority business advocacy commission, two members appointed by the House of Representatives, two members appointed by the Senate, one member appointed by speaker of the House and one member appointed by the president pro tem of the Senate.

It would also create the Small Business Impact Statement to be completed by any department drafting a new rule. The department would have to evaluate the cost to small businesses and propose rules to consider alternative compliance methods for small businesses.

Nearly 120,000 small businesses are expected to benefit from the creation of this board.

Throughout my career, promoting small business has been one of my top priorities. In 1989, President George Bush appointed me to serve as Regional Administrator for the United States Small Business Administration, a post I held until President Bush left in 1993. Later, in 1997, I was appointed to a shared staff position working with Sen. Christopher Bond, then Sen. John Ashcroft and Congressman Roy Blunt on matters relating to small business and federal procurement.

It's critical that Missouri maintain a thriving small business community.

SB 718 is identical to legislation passed during the 2003 Legislative Session, and vetoed by Gov. Bob Holden.

During the General Assembly's Veto Session in September, I was one of the Senators who tried to have the veto overridden. The measure failed with a 20 to 12 vote, with the vote falling largely along party lines. A two-thirds majority, or 23 votes, is needed to override a governor's veto.

Due to the importance of this legislation, this session we're working closely with the governor to develop a bill that he'll sign.

Because small businesses are small, state government often ignores the important role they play in our economy. Passing this legislation and putting this law into our statutes would be an acknowledgement that Missouri government wants the input of small business operators in determining the rules and regulations that govern them.

The Senate Financial, Governmental Organization, Veterans' Affairs and Elections Committee has passed this bill and has sent it to the Senate floor for debate.

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